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Letter dated 27 December 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you herewith information on the international symposium "National Model of Mother and Child Health-care in Uzbekistan: Healthy Mother — Healthy Child", held on 25 and 26 November 2011 in the capital of Uzbekistan, Tashkent (see annex).

I would highly appreciate if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 27.

(*Signed*) Murad **Askarov**
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Annex to the letter dated 27 December 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

National Mother and Child Health-care Model in Uzbekistan: Healthy Mother, Healthy Child

An international symposium entitled "National Model of Mother and Child Health-care in Uzbekistan: Healthy Mother, Healthy Child" took place in Tashkent (Republic of Uzbekistan) on 26 November 2011.

Organized at the initiative of President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan, the symposium was conducted by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in conjunction with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Some 300 world-renowned scientists and representatives of international organizations in the health-care field were in attendance, including the directors of WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA and ministry of health officials from nearly 40 countries, including the United States of America, China, the Russian Federation, Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, Finland, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Republic of Korea and others.

The main focus of the scientific forum was a thoroughgoing analysis of the outcome of the radical reforms carried out in Uzbekistan since independence to protect and improve public health, including maternal and child health, raise a healthy generation and establish an appropriate, integrated national health-care model.

The national model for delivery of medical services to the public encompasses the main areas covered by the health system reforms in Uzbekistan, which are:

- Equal conditions of primary medical care delivery ensured in urban and rural areas alike by establishing a new type of medical institution, the rural health centre and family polyclinic, where medical care is delivered by general practitioners;
- Organization and operation of a fundamentally new emergency care system, consisting of a national research centre for emergency medical care with branches in the provinces, with services provided through a network of institutions equipped with the latest in high-tech medical equipment;
- Establishment of specialized research and clinical medical centres, including centres for paediatrics and obstetrics and gynaecology, and national and regional perinatal centres, which has facilitated the use of cutting-edge high-tech medical equipment and creation of an effective system for the delivery of specialized medical care to mothers and children;
- Opening of up-to-date screening centres in all regions and implementation of a Government programme which has significantly reduced the number of children born with hereditary diseases and congenital abnormalities;

- Strengthening and further development of health-care infrastructure, especially at the primary health-care level and at obstetric and paediatric institutions;

- Effective disease control through measures to address epidemics and by providing full vaccination and revaccination coverage nationwide for preventable diseases;

- Sports programmes for children to boost the health of the younger generation.

Fundamental health-care reforms have been carried out in independent Uzbekistan under the leadership of President Islam Karimov. All the necessary conditions have been put in place to guarantee lives of health and dignity for the people, to raise a younger generation which is physically and mentally healthy and to expand the domestic production of pharmaceuticals. Relevant national laws have been adopted, and decrees and decisions of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers have been an important factor in the development of health care. The decree of the Head of State on the State programme to reform the health-care system of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 10 November 1998 marked the beginning of an important phase in the far-reaching reform of the sector.

Protection of maternal and child health and support for the good health of the new generation have been identified as State policy priorities. One of the first international instruments to which Uzbekistan acceded was the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the parliament ratified on 9 September 1992. The Act of the Republic of Uzbekistan on guarantees of the rights of the child was adopted on 8 January 2008.

The *Soglom Avlod Uchun* ("For a healthy generation") Order, the country's first such award, established on 4 March 1993, is a unique symbol which reflects both the aspiration for a healthy generation and the massive effort required to raise a younger generation that is physically and mentally robust.

Concern for the health of women, the procreaters of life, and for children signifies concern for the future of the nation. Since ancient times, the Uzbek people have respected women, who are the guardians of their families, the mothers and nurturers of well-balanced children. These fine Uzbek traditions and customs have gained enriched and renewed meaning in the course of the reforms enacted during the era of independence.

Raising awareness of the Healthy Mother, Healthy Child concept and nurturing a generation that is, in the fullest sense, well-balanced, have assumed the dimensions of a nationwide movement. By healthy generation we mean, above all, healthy children. Actions have been designed and measures consistently carried out in that area over the years, on the basis of the Healthy Mother, Healthy Child programme, to protect maternity and childhood, cultivate increased medical awareness in the family and strengthen the national gene pool.

In accordance with a Presidential decree of 24 November 2011, Margaret Chan, the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), received the *Soglom Avlod Uchun* Order in the First Degree for outstanding service in overseeing the work of WHO, the development of primary health-care services and implementation of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. This high honour was bestowed upon her by Head of State Islam Karimov.

In her remarks at the symposium, Dr. Chan noted that in Uzbekistan, health care, including maternal and child health care, was the focus of tremendous attention. She said that protection of maternal and child health had been identified as a priority, which was the soundest strategy, not only for the present, but also for the future.

Speakers at the gathering included the Minister of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Adham Ikramov; the director of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, Zsuzsanna Jakab; UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Steven Allen; the Minister of Health of Latvia, Ingrida Circene; the Minister of Health of Azerbaijan, Oktay Shiraliyev; United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative for Uzbekistan Anita Nirody; United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Eastern Europe and Central Asia Sub-regional Office Director Nikolai Botev; Vice President of the European Paediatric Association, Manual Moya (Spain); head of the Department of Paediatrics at the College of Medicine at Seoul National University and president of the Association of Paediatric Cardiologists of the Republic of Korea Chung Il Noh; Harvard University professor and chair of the Academic Societies Committee on International Programs of Harvard Medical School Edward James (United States of America); President of Save the Children Kim No-Bo (Republic of Korea); Charité University Clinic Professor Roland Wauer (Germany); the director of heart surgery at the Klinik Im Park, Paul Vogt (Switzerland), and others.

Zsuzsanna Jakab, director of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, noted that the Millennium Development Goals, adopted at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, held in 2000, served to identify for the international community the most important tasks related to improving quality of life and increasing human well-being. The indicators for Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5, reduce child mortality and improve maternal health, are key measures that attest to the effectiveness of all activities carried out in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. At the initiative of President Islam Karimov, a great deal has been done in this area in Uzbekistan, and the outcomes achieved serve as a model for other States. Today, many countries in the European region are elaborating reform strategies that take account of Uzbekistan's national mother and child health-care model.

Particular attention was drawn to the fact that in Uzbekistan, the objectives set forth in the Millennium Development Goals have been incorporated into national action plans and Government programmes.

Thoroughgoing improvements in public health care became a State policy priority following achievement of independence. As part of massive reforms in all areas implemented under the leadership of the President of Uzbekistan, tremendous transformations have been carried out to provide for the establishment of an Uzbek national health-care model. The appropriate legislative framework has been developed. The State health-care system reform programme, established in 1998 by a decree of President Islam Karimov, set forth the development strategy for medical service for the subsequent period, based on universal access to high-quality medical services.

Speakers at the symposium noted that a world-class national medical services delivery model has been created in Uzbekistan in recent years. A network of qualitatively new institutions that meet the very highest requirements has been set

up. These include a national emergency medical assistance centre and specialized clinical research centres in various branches of medicine. Multidisciplinary hospitals for children and adults operate in the regions, new maternity facilities have been built and primary care has been bolstered, including in rural health centres.

An integrated system for the delivery of specialized care to children has been created. It includes a national specialized clinical research paediatric centre and 13 regional children's multidisciplinary medical centres. Qualified care for mothers and newborns using the very latest in high-tech methods is provided at the national specialized research medical centre for obstetrics and gynaecology and its regional branches and perinatal centres.

State-of-the-art screening centres have been opened in every region of the country, in accordance with the State mother and child screening programme adopted at the initiative of the Head of State. This has raised prevention and treatment of congenital and hereditary diseases to a qualitatively new level.

Improved diet is a component of the national strategy to enhance the well-being of the population. The necessary legal and regulatory framework to guarantee food safety and quality has been put in place. Acts on State sanitary oversight, prevention of micronutrient deficiency, certification of products and services and prevention of iodine deficiency disorders have been adopted. Preventive measures are being taken in Uzbekistan to protect reproductive health and bolster the health of pregnant women by providing them with special multivitamin complexes containing the necessary range of vital micronutrients. The State has allocated funds for the procurement of polyvitamin complexes every year to support the health of pregnant women living in rural areas, boost the health of mothers and prevent congenital defects. Flour fortification and salt iodization programmes are successfully under way. All of the above, together with timely clinical and preventive services, has led to a substantial reduction in iodine deficiency in the population and in anaemia among women of childbearing age.

The President issued a Decision of 13 April 2009 on additional measures to protect the health of mothers and children and raise a healthy generation and a Decision of 1 July 2009 on a programme of measures to further strengthen and improve the effectiveness of actions to promote reproductive health, the birth of healthy children and the development of a physically and mentally robust generation for the period 2009 to 2013. Particular attention has been given to measures designed to improve the health of women of childbearing age, promote birth spacing, prevent early marriages and marriages between close relatives, improve medical workers' qualifications, improve facilities at obstetric and primary care institutions and educate the public on reproductive health matters. Outreach to involve children and youth in exercise and sports are also important to raising a well-balanced, flourishing new generation.

Resolution of the Tashkent International Symposium on the National Mother and Child Health-Care Model in Uzbekistan: Healthy Mother, Healthy Child

An international symposium on a policy priority of the Uzbekistan Government, healthy mothers and healthy children, was held in Tashkent on 25 and 26 November 2011. The purpose of the symposium was to raise the international community's awareness of Uzbekistan's achievements in the field of maternal and child health.

The following events took place in connection with the symposium on 25 November:

- A panel discussion on current priorities for achieving Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 in the European region, the participants in which included ministers of health and national delegations to the symposium, as well as directors and experts from international organizations;

- 15 parallel conferences and master classes on mother-and-child issues of current interest, led by prominent scientists and specialists from pre-eminent medical clinics and centres.

The main symposium programme took place on 26 November.

Some 1,000 people, including Government officials, members of the diplomatic corps posted to Uzbekistan, parliamentarians from both upper and lower chambers, representatives of community and international organizations and health-care professionals, attended the symposium. Some 230 directors of health-care systems (ministers and deputy ministers) and international organizations, international experts and prominent scientists and specialists from some 40 countries participated in an extremely animated discussion of the outcomes of the national mother and child health-care model implementation.

There were discussions, in eight parallel sessions, of outcomes in the principal areas of the national mother and child health-care model:

- Management of outpatient polyclinic care for children in the context of health-care system reform; issues related to the delivery of emergency care to children;

- The current status of and problems in specialized medical care for children;

- State-of-the-art perinatal and neonatal technology based on the principles of evidence-based medicine;

- Mother and child screening as the foundation of congenital and hereditary disease prevention in children;

- Vaccine-based prevention and children's infectious illnesses;

- Reproductive health and creating medical awareness within the family; and a healthy diet;

- A global partnership to achieve the Millennium Development Goals: results and prospects.

Performance improvement recommendations were developed for each area and included in the symposium resolution.

In closing, delegates to the Tashkent International Symposium on the National Mother and Child Health-Care Model in Uzbekistan: Healthy Mother, Healthy Child, held on 25 and 26 November 2011, highlighted the need to:

1. Recognize Uzbekistan's national mother and child health-care model, Healthy Mother, Healthy Child, as an effective strategy for reaching global development goals and the considerable progress made in mother and child health care in Uzbekistan;

2. Note that, as a result of sustained activities to reform the national health-care system, a holistic organizational and institutional medical care delivery system has been established, encompassing all levels of health care from rural health centres providing primary care to specialized medical centres delivering complex high-tech medical services to the public;

3. Acknowledge Uzbekistan's contribution and its full commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals related to health, sustainable development and a global partnership for development;

4. Recommend the following avenues of activity based on mother and child health-care results obtained in Uzbekistan:

- Further capacity-building for health-care workers and implementation of practical health-care approaches based on WHO and UNICEF recommendations in the context of mother and child health care; institutional enhancement; and improved management of the system of primary health-care institutions;

- Integration of emergency care institutions and state-of-the-art technology for emergency obstetric and paediatric care at all levels; continued development of acute and emergency medical care;

- Further development of specialized paediatric care and creation of an effective vertical system for managing prevention, early detection and treatment of children's diseases in order to reduce infant and child morbidity and mortality; and continued elaboration and adoption of evidence-based clinical guidelines for children's diseases;

- Universal access to quality maternal, reproductive and child health-care services, including prevention, health promotion and improved prenatal and pre-delivery care and provision of quality care to pregnant women, mothers and newborns; restructuring of pre-delivery and neonatal care; continued development and adoption of evidence-based clinical guidelines and standards; use of confidential enquiries into maternal deaths and auditing of critical cases in accordance with WHO methodology;

- Further development and quality enhancement of pre-delivery and neonatal screening programmes and adoption of state-of-the-art evidence-based screening technology;

- Achievement and maintenance of a high level of timely immunization coverage with vaccine prevention for children in accordance with the national immunization calendar;

- Consolidation of actions taken by the countries of the region, the international community and international organizations to ensure favourable health and epidemiological conditions; improved monitoring and oversight of country implementation of the International Health Regulations;

- Close cooperation and coordination of activities with governmental, non-governmental and international organizations to further stabilize and reduce HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria incidence and morbidity;

- Continued implementation of comprehensive Government programmes to foster reproductive health and raise public awareness of medical issues, with

the involvement of the relevant governmental, non-governmental, community and international organizations;

Extensive outreach to promote a healthy lifestyle for young people and continued improvement of the premarital training programme on healthy families;

Further implementation of legislation, regulations and programmes to improve nutrition and prevent micronutrient deficiency, particularly among women of childbearing age and children; promotion of breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of additional food for all children;

Further strengthening of the intersectoral partnership with a defined contribution for each sector and promotion of joint actions to achieve the health-related Millennium Development Goals;

Continued improvement of the information system for mother and childcare, family planning and the needs of vulnerable groups, elaboration of monitoring mechanisms and promotion of sound practices for decision-making and drafting of regulations;

Joint activities with local communities and civil society to plan comprehensive programmes; appeals to the United Nations system and other partners to support national efforts to improve the health and living conditions of mothers and children.